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NFAC 2084-80

20 March 1980

Memorandum for DD/NFA

Subject: Senior Review Panel Comments on Interagency
Intelligence Production
(NFIB-14.2/5, 12 March 1980)

1. If the new set of definitions for interagency estimates is intended to reverse the recent trend away from NIEs and toward IIMs, it is unlikely to achieve that purpose.

2. The document raises or suggests six criteria on distinguishing NIEs from IIMs.

a. The importance of the subject is to be "highest" for NIEs and "high" for IIMs.

b. Relation to policy concerns is "direct" for NIEs and "indirect" for IIMs.

c. While NIEs are always forward looking, IIMs may or may not be so.

d. NIEs will display significant differences in estimative judgments while IIMs are not required to do so.

e. NIEs will always go before NFIB while IIMs will normally not.

f. The length of NIEs is to stay within defined limits. The length of IIMs is indefinite.

3. We feel that (a) and (b) do represent the most important criteria for distinguishing between NIEs and IIMs. Nevertheless, they are too fuzzy to stand in the

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way of a likely preference for IIMs. We believe that (c), (d), (e) and (f) will tend to perpetuate a disproportionate choice of IIMs over NIEs.

4. If a substantial shift toward NIEs is a management objective, two choices seem open:

a. To tolerate these ambiguities and approve the present document, and to rely on C/NIC for counteracting the probable preference for IIMs.

b. To restrict IIMs to the reaching of factual determinations without presenting estimates about the future.

5. However, if (a) is chosen, we recommend that additional distinguishing criteria, even if only suggestive, be incorporated in the definition of IIMs which would then read as follows: "Interagency Intelligence Memorandum. The IIM is an assessment of a foreign situation of high but only indirect policy concern to the US. The IIM often presents a considerable amount of evidential or methodological detail and may or may not present estimates about the future. It is the appropriate interagency vehicle on occasions when the paramount intelligence task is the reaching of factual determinations. It will display significant differences in analytical judgments if necessary. The IIM is issued by the DD/NFA, is coordinated at least the working level in the Intelligence Community; on occasion it may be referred to NFIB and issued by the DCI."

6. As a final note, while we recognize the need for flexibility on the length of IIMs, we nevertheless believe that drafters should be instructed to keep them as short and concise as possible.


William Leonhart

cc: C/NIC

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment

Attachment to
NFIB-14.2/5
12 March 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Foreign Intelligence Board

SUBJECT : Interagency Intelligence Production

It is evident that, with changes in personnel and the passage of time, there is no longer a clear understanding in the Community of what distinguishes an NIE, an SNIE, or an IIM, and of the purpose of each. This is reflected in the tendency to treat a disproportionate number of important topics in IIMs rather than NIEs. In an effort to clarify these matters, we have developed the attached guidelines for your consideration. Please give me any suggestions or comments by 1 April.



Bruce C. Clarke, Jr.

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Attachment

This memo can be downgraded
to UNCLASSIFIED when separated
from attachment

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FORMS OF INTERAGENCY INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTION

1. Interagency intelligence production is conducted under the aegis of the National Intelligence Council. There are four standard forms for such production.

- a. National Intelligence Estimate. The NIE addresses a foreign situation of highest policy concern to the United States. The exposition is normally structured in a way that will illuminate policy issues and, when appropriate, policy choices available to the US. An NIE goes beyond the consideration of factual evidence to estimate on likely outcomes. It displays any significant differences in estimative judgments, along with the rationale underlying each position. It is issued by the DCI with the advice of NFIB.
- b. Special National Intelligence Estimate. The SNIE shares the attributes of the NIE but addresses an urgent and specific problem. It usually stems from a request by policymakers. It is shorter and is prepared and coordinated more quickly than an NIE. It is issued by the DCI with the advice of NFIB.
- c. Interagency Intelligence Memorandum. The IIM is an assessment of a foreign situation of high policy concern to the US. The IIM often presents a considerable amount of evidential or methodological detail and may or may not present estimates about the future. It is the appropriate interagency vehicle on occasions when the paramount intelligence task is the reaching of factual determinations. The IIM is issued by the DD/NFA, is coordinated at at least the working level in the Intelligence Community; on occasion it may be referred to NFIB and issued by the DCI.

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- d. Alert Memorandum. The AM is a brief assessment of a current development threatening US interests. It addresses the possible trend of events, the resulting implications for US interests, and relevant intelligence collection actions. It is the shortest and most time-urgent of the types of interagency intelligence production, and the degree of coordination within the Intelligence Community varies according to time available.

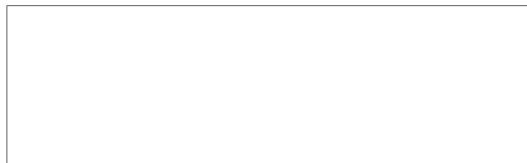
2. The attached chart identifies, for comparative purposes, salient characteristics of these forms of interagency production. Each interagency project is distinctive. The decision whether it should result in NIE, SNIE, or IIM rests on a judicious weighing of these characteristics.

3. The Memorandum to Holders is a device used:

- to reaffirm the findings of an existing paper after the passage of time or after significant changes in the situation.
- to update an existing paper that does not require extensive reexamination.
- to consider new questions or materials in conjunction with an existing, valid paper.

Memoranda to Holders are prepared to the same standards and by the same procedures as their parent papers.

- Attachment



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	Importance of Subject	Relation to Policy Concerns	Projects Forward?	Preferred Length	Detailed Factual Treatment	Time to Prepare	Method of Coordination
NIE	Highest	Direct, Broad, Basic	Yes - year or several years	10-20 Pages w/annexes if necessary	Primarily in Annexes	Weeks to Months	NFIB principals
SNIE	Highest	Direct, Focused, Time-Urgent	Yes - weeks or months	5-8 pages	Limited; No Annexes	Days to weeks	NFIB principals (through reps)
IIM	High	Indirect	Maybe - no set limit	Indefinite	In text or annexes as appropriate	Weeks to months	Working level
M	Highest	Direct	Yes - Days to Weeks	1-2 pages	No	Hours to Days	Working Level

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